



American Lung Association
of the Northeast

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March 11, 2013

Government Administrations and Elections Committee
Room 2200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

**Testimony of the American Lung Association in Connecticut in
Raised House Bill 5743 An Act Concerning Disbursements from
the Tobacco Settlement Fund and Moneys Received from
Tobacco Taxes**

Senator Musto, Representative Jutila and Members of the Government
Administrations and Elections Committee:

My name is Michelle Marichal and I serve as the Acting Director of
Health Education and Public Policy at the American Lung Association
(ALA) in Connecticut. The American Lung Association is a not-for-profit
public health organization dedicated to fighting lung disease through
research, education and public policy.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in Connecticut.
Tobacco use causes an annual expenditure of \$1.63 million in
healthcare costs in Connecticut alone. Each year, 4300 kids in our
state will become new smokers. Tobacco use is an issue that requires
funding for tobacco prevention and cessation services in order to help
existing smokers quit and prevent initiation.

Connecticut has done a good job increasing tobacco excise taxes and
currently has the third highest tobacco taxes in the country.
Connecticut is severely lagging behind in terms of consistently funding
the state's Tobacco Prevention and Control program. Increasing
cigarette prices is the single most effective tool in reducing cigarette
use. Unfortunately, when individuals wish to quit smoking they do not
have enough available resources to help them quit. This is due to the
lack of funding available for programs and services.

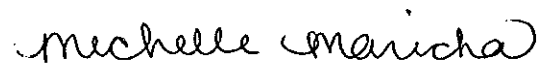
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends
that Connecticut spend \$43.9 million on tobacco prevention and to

help smokers quit. Our state doesn't even come close. In 2012, Connecticut did not spend any money and in 2013 there is a \$6 million allocation. The American Lung Association believes that all states should be moving toward the CDC recommended levels. According to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, Connecticut will receive \$535 million in tobacco generated revenue from the Master Settlement and state excise taxes.

The American Lung Association urges the state to allocate an increasing percentage of this tobacco generated revenue each year to ultimately achieve the CDC recommended funding level of \$43.9 million. This investment will pay off in lowered health care costs and reduced death and disability among people in our state.

We are encouraged by the step forward taken in 2013. We urge you to continue to increase the allocation for tobacco prevention and quit smoking programs this year and in the future. Failing to act will have a cost in both lives and money.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Marichal". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Michelle Marichal

CT Acting Director, Health Education and Public Policy

American Lung Association in Connecticut